

Supporting Iraq's Constitution

The January 2005 election installed a National Assembly charged with drafting a new constitution— emphasizing democracy, rule of law, the private sector, and human rights. USAID provided foreign and Iraqi constitutional specialists to the drafting committee. Input from over 111,000 national surveys kept the Committee in touch with national sentiment. The Iraqi Women's National Coalition, supported by USAID, developed a 10 point statement adopted by the drafting committee. Public outreach through Iraqi NGOs and international partners introduced over 140,000 ordinary Iraqis to the constitutional process. Supported by USAID, local NGOs televised debates and distributed 1.5 million printed information pieces. Nearly 9,500 referendum monitors, trained by USAID partners, and close coordination with the United Nations helped ensure a successful referendum in October 2005.

USAID partners in supporting Iraq's constitution included America's Development Foundation (ADF) and members of the Consortium for Elections and Political Party Strengthening (CEPPS): National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI), and IFES.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMISSION

Provision of International Constitutional Expertise to Support Drafting Process. At the request of the Iraqi Transitional Government, USAID supported the Iraqi Constitutional Drafting Committee, providing expertise in legislative and constitutional issues, national surveys, and in-depth issue studies. (NDI)

- Provided 13 international constitutional experts to the Constitutional Committee.
- Provided 71 topical papers and commentaries to the Constitutional Committee.
- Held consultations, seminars, and workshops with members of the Constitutional Committee, INA, and Executive and Judicial branches on constitutional development and public education.
- Established a remote International Advisory Group composed of 30 prominent Middle Eastern, European, and American constitutional law and Islamic law experts to provide advice on substantive issues and processes throughout the constitutional development process.
- Provided results from over 111,000 national surveys covering key issues. (NDI, IRI)
- Provided comparative research and background materials on constitutional law issues to the Constitutional Committee, including the briefing book *Constitutional Studies: Fundamental Issues for the New Iraq Constitution* that addresses key questions such as federalism, women's rights, and the relationship between religion and state.

Government Communications and Outreach. USAID assisted in the development of a public communications strategy for the Constitutional Committee, trained public relations officers, and helped produce press releases on the constitutional process. (IRI)

WOMEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

Supporting Women's Advocacy and the Constitution. USAID provided program support to assist organizations and women leaders to advocate for stronger legal rights in the Constitution.

- Supported the Engendering the Constitution project that assisted women leaders from the INA (including members of the Constitutional Committee), Provincial Councils, and civil society to ensure that fundamental rights of women were included in the Constitution. Ten key points calling for equity clauses, internationally recognized human rights, and female representation – drafted and advocated by the group – were adopted in the draft Constitution. (NDI)
- Assisted the Minister of Women's Affairs to produce *Women in the Constitution*. (NDI)
- Supported national workshops on "Women and the Constitution" for women leaders throughout government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector. (IRI, NDI, ADF)
- Provided advocacy training to women's groups focused on strengthening gender equality provisions in the constitution, including property, marriage, and inheritance rights. (NDI) Provide Technical Assistance to the Constitutional Drafting Process: Provided constitutional and legislative advisors to speak to the Constitutional Committee on the role of women and human rights in the constitution. (NDI)

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Building Public Awareness of Women in the Constitution. Outreach efforts and local advocacy groups, supported by USAID, helped ensure that the role of women in the Constitution was openly discussed by the Iraqi public.

- Provided a grant to support the Rafadin Women's Coalition (RWC) – a local Iraqi group of more than 30 women's organizations – to host conferences, distribute leaflets, and release television and radio spots promoting women's rights in a constitutional democracy. (IRI)
 - Workshops and conferences on women and the constitution in Baghdad, Hillah, and Basrah .
 - Launched campaign entitled Hand in Hand for a Fair Constitution, including televised ads.
 - Produced two talk show episodes on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Participants included Iraqis involved in civil society, National Assembly members (both Islamic and secular), and other Iraqi figures.
- Supported extensive training on the CEDAW to women leaders and organizations across Iraq to raise awareness of international standards on women's issues. (NDI, ADF)
- Hosted national conferences, workshops, and seminars to promote women's political participation and discuss ways to promote gender equality. (NDI, IRI, ADF)
- Provided small grants to women advocacy CSOs in support of engendering the constitution. (ADF)

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND CIVIC EDUCATION ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS

Workshops on the Constitution. USAID supported constitutional workshops. A total of 4,770 workshops were conducted across Iraq, with nearly 150,000 participants. (ADF, NDI, IRI)

- Under the Constitutional Awareness initiative, over 3,000 sessions were conducted in all 18 governorates benefiting over 140,000 participants, over one-third women. (NDI)
- Both the Constitutional Dialogues and the Our Constitution program distributed questionnaires and surveys to participants on key constitutional issues including federalism, the role of Islam, and the rights of women. The analyzed results of over 111,000 of these surveys were presented to the Constitutional Committee members, keeping them in touch with national sentiment. (NDI, IRI) Public Outreach. USAID efforts produced and disseminated 1.5 million printed materials.
- Produced and distributed pamphlets in Arabic (575,000) and in Kurdish (150,000) with the assistance of the Civic Coalition for Free Elections (CCFE), a network of 63 Iraqi NGOs. (IRI)
- Produced and disseminated 200 training presentations in Arabic and Kurdish. (IRI)
- Produced 500,000 constitutional supplements in Arabic and Kurdish with a foreword by the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee. The supplement was inserted into national, regional, and local newspapers, reaching Shi'a, Sunni, Kurdish communities nationwide. (IRI)
- Produced 150,000 posters in Arabic and Kurdish distributed throughout Iraq. (IRI)
- Developed and distributed 75,000 copies of the Guide to Women and the Constitution. (NDI)
- Released a third edition of the policy journal Iraqi Papers discussing the constitutional drafting process, the role of civil society in democracy, political culture, and economic problems in Iraq. Distributed 50,000 copies as supplements with the Al Sabah newspaper throughout Iraq. (IRI)

Media and the Constitution. Iraqi NGOs, supported by USAID grants and program activities, produced and broadcasted a series of television and radio programs. Public debates, issue ads, and voter education programs reached the entire country.

- Produced weekly public broadcast television programs (90-minutes) with national coverage to promote the constitutional process, including updates on the drafting process, panel experts, and installments devoted to women's issues in the constitution. Programs were also broadcasted on the national Iraqi Media Network radio stations. (ADF/IREX)
- Broadcasted three airings of a Town Hall meeting on the constitution that involved three members of the Constitutional Committee, reaching 90 percent of Iraq. (IRI)
- Aired three talk shows with the four members of the Constitutional Committee members (including the Constitutional Committee Chair, Sheikh Hamoudi) on prime time television. (IRI)
- Conducted public opinion polls on elections and the constitutional process to track public attitudes, shared with Iraq's political leadership and the constitutional committee. (IRI)

REACHING OUT TO SUNNI ARABS

USAID programs reached out to Sunni Arab areas, working with tribal and religious leaders on outreach efforts.

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USAID facilitated the delivery of 5,000 Constitutional Committee posters to Fallujah. Over 860 workshops were conducted in Sunni Arab communities, reaching over 25,000 participants. (NDI, IRI)
